BOY SCOUT COLLECTS DONATED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

Window Rock, Arizona, April 16, 2013. During Christmas Saint Nicholas delivers gifts to little children even in Navajo land. But today and with the help from a Boy Scout, the Navajo Library delivered gifts of books to Navajo children at four Navajo Head Start schools: Kinlichee, Jeddito, Steamboat and Low Mountain, Arizona.

At each location, children smiled as they receive their books and they held them with respect. Immediately upon receiving the books, they open the books and turn the pages. It is clear from watching them that they were excited about the books. Thanks to the Navajo Library for making a wonderful day for these children.

Despite windy weather with blowing sand and with low visibility, the Navajo Library reached its goal to deliver 100 books to Head Start children. “These young Head Start children are our future leaders, lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers, mechanics and other professions,” says Rosalie Tsosie, a teacher of 16 years at the Steamboat Head Start.

Books have insurmountable positive effect on children’s education especially at the Head Start level. “These books came from a project in which a Boy Scout from Salt Lake City, Utah, collected donated books and the Navajo Library received the books to deliver to Head Start children,” explains Everett Etsitty, Senior Warehouseman with the Navajo Nation Library. “This is a two to three-month process and today we delivered 100 books. These children’s books are head start and elementary reading levels.”

That Boy Scout is none other than Shane Oh, who is an Eagle Scout candidate, with Boy Scout Troop 384 and a senior at Skyline High school. Coordinating efforts with several other volunteers, Shane’s book drive was able to collect over 1,000 donated children’s books.

In movie stories, superman and batman are always heroes, but today Shane Oh and the Navajo Library were the heroes to Head Start children.
April 5th, 2013

The following information is a summary of the Navajo Nation Board of Education regular meeting held April 5, 2013. Upon approving numerous reports on the agenda, the Navajo Nation Board of Education approved three Resolutions:

1. Resolution NNBEEAP-18X-2013 to support the Dream Diné Charter School Application to the New Mexico Public Education Department to establish a public charter school at Shiprock, NM;

2. Resolution NNEAP-1XX-2013 to support the Eva B. Storkley Diné BiOlta Magnet Immersion School with the Central Consolidate School District in Shiprock, N.M.; and


May 10th, 2013

At the May 10, 2013, Board meeting and based on the performance evaluation of “Significantly Exceeds Standards”, the Navajo Board of Education (NNBOE) renewed contract with Superintendent Andrew Tah as Superintendent of Schools of the Department of Diné Education for 2013-2014.

In addition, NNBOE approved Resolution NNBEMY-193-2013 which re-authorized the Richfield Residential Hall, Inc., to continue grant operation pursuant to Public Law 100-297 beginning July 1, 2013, and ending July 30, 2017. Further, NNBOE approved Resolution NNBEMY-194-2013 to support the collection of Care-taker-Child pair speech digital recording equipment for linguistic analysis in the dissertation of Melvatha R. Chee. The title of the dissertation is An Introduction to the Acquisition of Navajo Verbs: A cross sectional study of children aged 10 months through 10 years.

June 2013

In the month of June 2013, NNBOE held series of Board meetings to consider grant and contract school reauthorizations. Based on the presentations at these meetings, the Board approved 23 grant school reauthorizations.

Since 1988, the Navajo Nation has required a review of all Public Law 100-297 Grant and Public Law 93-638 Contract schools applications before such school receive final approval by the Navajo Nation Board of Education. Pursuant to the Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act of 2005 (CJY-37-05), the Department of Diné Education has the responsibility and authority for implementing and enforcing education laws of the Navajo Nation.

In 2012, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council by Resolution HEHSCMY-012-12 authorized the Navajo Nation Board of Education to oversee school reauthorization applications and approvals.
There is never a moment that we can ignore the importance of education in young people’s life. The quality of education improves a student’s prospective of life. An educational experience fortifies a student for a better future. Time management skills, which students are learning today, are important assets to acquire early in life. Every day is important and time is essential.

In the month of April, students are busy taking exams and submitting homework assignments for credits toward graduation or promotion to the next grade level. Promotions and graduations are very important milestones to every student.

Schools are out around the middle of May. Before students are released for the summer, there are end of the school year award ceremonies to attend and seniors to attend graduation ceremonies. Some schools scheduled class trips in May and then schools are officially out for the summer.

While students are released, school administrators are busy preparing to open summer schools. This is a common scenario throughout the country. In Navajo, education has no beginning and no ending.

In June, families are taking vacations. Online and in school publications, there are over 110 recommendations for students to do during the summer. I like to take this opportunity to recommend a few ideas students can do during the summer months:

- Read a book;
- Attend a summer school;
- Write a journal;
- Do a research;
- Interview grandparents;
- Attend a Navajo ceremony with parents;
- Plant a garden;
- Learn a new hobby;
- Video record your vacation;
- Summer job if able to work;
- Visit a library on a weekly basis;
- Visit a museum and a zoo for educational purpose;

Books and classrooms are definitely important, and education can also be much more than a classroom environment.

Most important of all is exercise caution and safety. Educational experience outside the realm of classroom can be rewarding and educational. It provides an environment to discover new things and learn how to solve real problems.

Many Life experiences cannot be taught in classrooms. The world can be a classroom in the summertime.
NAVAJO LANGUAGE & CULTURE TEACHER SUMMER IMMERSION PROGRAM

By Dr. Ancita Benally, Program Manager, Office of Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Development

Navajo Language & Culture Teacher Summer Immersion Program at Navajo Technical College, Crownpoint, New Mexico, June 3-28, 2013

GOAL

The goal of the Navajo Language & Culture Teacher’s Summer Immersion Program is to prepare teachers to implement the goals of the Sovereignty in Dine Education Act (Title 10). The preservation, revival and maintenance of Navajo language are key directives of the Act. The Summer Teacher Immersion Program aims to prepare a cadre of teachers who are knowledgeable and skilled to instruct Navajo students in Navajo language and in the five areas of the Dine Content Standards.

The Navajo Language & Culture Teacher’s Summer Immersion Program aims to develop a cadre of teachers who are trained, highly qualified and certified to teach Navajo language and culture in the classroom.

OBJECTIVES

- To prepare Navajo language teachers with literacy skills and information about the language so they can have the appropriate expertise to be able to teach Navajo as a second language in an immersion language program setting.
- To instill in Navajo language and culture teachers a strong foundation in content knowledge of the 5 areas of the Dine Content Standards.
- To prepare teachers to pass the NALCC exam so they can be certified to teach Navajo language and culture.
- To give Navajo language and culture teachers opportunity to acquire teaching strategies in Navajo language and culture, and to allow them to acquire knowledge of teaching methods in working with Navajo language and culture that they can use in the classroom.
- To assist teachers in acquiring expertise to be able to develop Navajo language and culture instructional curriculum.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Who is eligible to participate? (For this summer only NM teaches because the funding is coming from NMPED):

- 25 New Mexico Grant/Contract School teachers
- Public school teachers in the Central Consolidated School District (5 teachers) or the Gallup-McKinley County School District (5 teachers)
- New Mexico BIE teachers (5 teachers)
- Only Navajo language and culture teachers, degreed or non-degreed

REQUIREMENT OF PARTICIPATIONS

Maintain campus residency from 6:00 p.m. Sunday through 5:30 Friday afternoon. Be willing to use Navajo language only when the program is in session. Participate in all cultural presentation activities. Participate in culture trips. Each participant must do a research project that will culminate in unit and lesson plans that can/will be used in participant’s classroom. Participants must attend classes daily & remain for the duration of the class; absences will be treated.

COURSE OFFERINGS

NAV 201: Introduction to Navajo Language – Native Speaker – 4 credits
Mr. Blackhorse Mitchell, Instructor

NAV 210: Contemporary Navajo Life & Experiences – 3 credits
Dr. Wesley Thomas, Instructor

NAV 221: Navajo Government – 3 credits
Dr. AnCita Benally, Instructor

NAV 250: Introduction to Navajo Linguistics – 4 credits
Dr. Wesley Thomas, Instructor

NAV 195/295: Teaching Methods/Strategies Course – 3 credits
Methods of Diné Language Instruction.
Instructor: Maggie Benally

CULTURE PRESENTATIONS

In addition to the coursework participants will be provided with culture presentations at least 2 times a week. These will be designed to provide content knowledge about particular topics. Right now the following are under consideration: Music/Dance, K’e, Astronomy, Navajo Language, Dine Child Development & Child Rearing and other aspects of Navajo culture. The aim is to provide teachers with very specific knowledge of various aspects of Navajo culture and life.

CULTURE TRIPS

The Summer Navajo Language and Culture Teacher Immersion Program will also provide one or two trips to locations of cultural and historical significance. These may be overnight trips. Again these are designed to provide teachers with knowledge and understanding of Navajo history, culture, and life.
TEACHERS TAKE DINÉ LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT TEST TRAINING

Window Rock, Arizona, April 5, 2013. At the Navajo Nation Museum, the Office of Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Development, an Office within the Department of Diné Education, convened the Oral Diné Language Assessment Training. The training began around 8:30 am and ended at 4:00 pm Friday.

Dr. Ancita Benally, Program Education Manager, reports: “More than 70 teachers and educators participated in the training. These teachers are from Grant and Contract Schools on the Navajo Nation.”

The agenda covered:

- PowerPoint presentation on Diné Language Assessment;
- Distribution of testing materials and instruction;
- Pair practice; and
- Group discussion and feedback.

According to the PowerPoint presentation developed by the Office of Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Development, the broad purpose of the teacher training for the administering the oral Diné Language Assessment is to comply with Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act of 2005 which sanctioned “The Navajo language is an essential element of life, and identity of the Navajo people. Instruction in the Navajo language shall be made available for all grade levels in all schools serving the Navajo Nation.”

The testing materials included the assessment booklet; score sheets and test kit.

The purpose of the assessment testing is to measure the students Navajo language skills; support students in bilingual and bi-literate programs; and report data to the Office of Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Development and New Mexico Public Education Department.

There are 34 schools on the Navajo Nation. OSCAD set the month of April 2013 for schools to complete the Diné Language Assessment testing.
‘Ádaa ‘Ákozniidzíí’ – One Becomes Aware of Self

STANDARD:
K’é dóó nitsáhákees dóó nahat’á náásgóó iíná bee siih hasingo ádoolniil.
(I will develop an understanding of Diné way of life.)

Concept 3 – Iíná
Bits’ágdóó bee da’iínáanii baa ákonisin dooleel.
(I will implement and recognize the Diné lifestyle.)

PO 1. Hooghan nímainá bahane’ shil bééhózin dooleel.
I will recognize the stories of a hogan.

PO 2. Kéyah dóó Naalldooshii dóó Tó shinaagóó dahólónígii shil bééhózin dooleel.
I will recognize the sacred teaching of the Land and Water Creatures.

PO 3. Shinaagóó nanise’ dahólónígii dabízhí’ shil bééhózin dooleel.
I will name the various plants within my surroundings.

PO 4. Shinaagóó azee’ dahólónígii dabízhí’ shil bééhózin dooleel.
I will name the herbs within my surroundings.

Concept 4 – Síihasin
Dinék’ehji na’nitín siláhííí bóhoosh’aahgo éí bee siih dinisdzíin dooleel.
(I will apply and practice the Diné way of life with confidence.)

PO 1. Honeeshghish dóó Kʼo’ siláagí na’nitín baa ákonisin dooleel.
I will recognize the cultural teachings of the fire.

PO 2. Tó choo’íígi baa ákonisin dooleel.
I will recognize the value of water.

PO 3. Sqo’ Dineʼé baa hane’íígi baa ákonisin dooleel.
I will listen to oral stories about the stars.

PO 4. Biką́ dóó bi’áadíí baa ákonisin dooleel.
I will know opposites of nature.
GRANT SCHOOL REAUTHORIZATIONS

By Darrick Franklin, Senior Education Specialist, Office of Diné Accountability and Compliance, NNDODE

2010-2013 Reauthorization will consist of 22 Grant schools and three Residential Halls located throughout the Navajo Nation as well as off the Navajo Reservation. Richfield Residential Hall Inc., in Richfield, Utah is the furthest distance and Alamo Navajo School Board Inc., in Magdalena, New Mexico being the next. Currently, all schools have submitted their Reauthorization Application and await a decision on when the Navajo Nation Board of Education (NNBOE) will be able to schedule a meeting to hear their commendations and recommendations.

At this NNBOE meeting, school administrators and governing board members will answer questions the NNBOE may have in regards to their school. Five (5) offices within the Department of Diné Education (DODE) will also make specific recommendations and/or commendations on how they work with the Contract/Grant Schools. The DODE offices that are part of the Reauthorization process are as follows: Office of Diné Accountability and Compliance (ODAC); Office of Educational Research and Statistics (OERS); Office Standards/Curriculum/Assessment Development (OSCAD); Office of Diné School Improvement (ODSI); and Navajo Nation AdvancED—North Central Association (AdvancED-NCA). ODAC will provide information on the school’s finance, budget, governance, residential hall, and background/reference check compliance. OERS will provide statistical information on the school’s performance. OSCAD will present on the different ways the Navajo language and culture are being implemented as well as the assessment process within the Contact/Grant schools. ODSI will present data on how each school implements “Using Data Process” (UDP) to show growth in improving academic achievement of students. ODSI also works with the school’s UDP data team with the development and implementation of a plan with strategies to improve academic performance. AdvancED-NCA will provide information on the school’s accreditation status. The two main areas of review will be whether a school achieves AYP and their status of their budget/finance/audit.

At the conclusion of all presentations, the five DODE offices will provide possible conditions/recommendations in ways the school can improve. This is done by issuing conditions and sanctions with a timeline that the schools must put into practice. The number of years being reauthorized will be determined by using only two evaluation instruments as determined by the Navajo Nation Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC). They include Budget/Finance/Audit and School Improvement (Adequate Yearly Progress—AYP). This information is provided by the individual schools and the information is obtained through a scheduled Administrative Review visit. Documents are viewed by the ODAC team and any questions during this review are answered by the respective school staff. Either one year, two years or four years of Reauthorization are issued depending on the amount of findings within the school’s Budget/Finance/Audit and School Improvement (AYP).

The ODAC team consists of Victor Benally, Education Program Manager, who oversees the section of governance for all Contract/Grant schools and the Chinle Agency schools. Phillip Belone oversees the school’s budget, finance and audit section and the Eastern Agency schools. Darrick Franklin oversees all residential halls and the Western Agency schools. Lavida Maestas is assigned to the Fort Defiance Agency schools and oversees all employee background/reference check compliance. All other questions and follow up can be directed to Margaret Watson, ODAC’s Office Specialist, who is well acquainted with the activities of ODAC.
Students Receive Awards at Arizona Science & Engineer Fair

Window Rock, Arizona, April 8, 2013. Several Navajo students (Grades 5th – 12th) from the Navajo Nation entered their science projects at the 2013 Arizona Science & Engineer Fair held at the South Hall of the Phoenix Convention Center, 111 North 3rd Street, Phoenix, Arizona. The Arizona Science & Engineer Fair organization (established in 1970) has been holding science & engineer fair every year.

According to information provided by the Arizona Science & Engineer Fair Organization, this year over 800 students (Grades 5th – 12th) entered science projects. These students came from over 170 schools and over 340 judges volunteered making it possible for evaluating and scoring science projects.

Students set up their projects Monday (from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM), April 1, 2013. On Tuesday, April 2, 2013, a “Judging Day for all students”, judges reviewed and evaluated science projects. Students removed their projects Wednesday, April 3, 2013.

Using the International Science & Engineering judging criteria, the following students received awards:

**ASM Materials Education Foundation Awards**
- Deshna Joe & Alexander Wytewa Navajo Preparatory School Special Award

**Animal Science**
- Amy Tsosie & Jayme Morris Tuba City Boarding School 3rd Place

**Behavioral & Social Sciences**
- Kaly Arvizu Tuba City Boarding School 1st Place
- Shantel King & Jazmin Benally-Navajo Preparatory School 3rd Place
- Miles Billy & David Laughter-Greasewood Springs Community School 4th Place

**Chemistry**
- Alannah-Grace Mangubat Tuba City Boarding School 2nd Place
- Kayla O’jaye & Nizhoni Jake-Navajo Preparatory School 2nd Place
- Tia Morgan Crownpoint Community School 4th Place

**Earth & Planetary Science**
- Danyel Johnson Tsa Bit Ai Middle School 4th Place

**Engineering: Electrical & Mechanical**
- Isiah Chavaz & Tyler Bahe Navajo Preparatory School 3rd Place

**Environmental Management**
- Deshna Joe & Alexander Wytewa Navajo Preparatory School 4th Place

**Environmental Science**
- Angel Vasquez & Raekina Touchine Greasewood Spring Community School 4th Place

**Medicine & Health Sciences**
- Justina Slim Tuba City Boarding School 1st Place
- Kenisha Nez Greasewood Springs Community School 4th Place

**Physics & Astronomy**
- Seth Crespin & Johnny Gutierrez To’Hajiilee Community School 4th Place
- Johndenmyr Mendoza & Trevison Benallie Shiprock Associated Schools, Inc. 4th Place
- Joel Charles Navajo preparatory School 4th Place

**Plant Science**
- Crystal Stewart Navajo Preparatory School 4th Place

The Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education expresses appreciation to school administrators and parents for supporting their students and child as they developed their science projects and assisting with transportation to the Arizona Science & Engineering Fair.

Superintendent Andrew Tah explains, “Participating students learn so much from science projects and we hope that next year more students will participate.” “The Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education encourages all students to continue reading, studying and conducting researches for the next year science fairs.”

Additional information on the Arizona Science & Engineer Fair can be accessed at www.azsef.org.